

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) A vehicle upper body structure, in which a front door and a rear door cover a continuous door opening with no partition in a side part of a vehicle body so that the door opening is opened and closed, the front door is pivotally attached at a front part thereof to the vehicle body so that the front door is opened and closed, and the rear door is pivotally attached at a rear part thereof to the vehicle body so that the rear door is opened and closed, comprising:

a roof opening which is formed in a roof portion of the vehicle body and through which a vehicle cabin leads to the outside of a vehicle;

an opening and closing member which covers said roof opening so that the roof opening is opened and closed;

a roof opening frame which supports said opening and closing member; and

a load transmitting member which transmits a load in the vehicle-width directions, said load transmitting member being disposed at a side part of said roof opening frame such that the load transmitting member is located between the roof opening frame and a position corresponding to free-end upper parts of both doors when they are in the closed position.

2. (Original) The vehicle upper body structure according to claim 1, wherein said load transmitting member, in side view, overlaps with free-end parts of both doors which keep the door opening closed, in the front and rear directions of the vehicle.

3. (Previously Presented) The vehicle upper body structure according to claim 1, wherein said load transmitting member is connected at one end thereof to said roof opening frame, and is connected at the other end thereof to a roof rail in the vicinity of free-end parts of both doors when they are in the closed position.

4. (Previously Presented) The vehicle upper body structure according to claim 1, wherein:

a reinforcement extends in substantially the up and down directions in the vicinity of a free-end part of at least one of both doors; and

said load transmitting member is connected to a roof rail so as to overlap, in side view, with an upper part of said reinforcement in the front and rear directions of the vehicle when both doors are in the closed position.

5. (Original) The vehicle upper body structure according to claim 1, wherein:

a door-side lock portion is disposed at an upper part in the vicinity of a free end of at least one of both doors, a vehicle body-side lock portion is disposed in a position where a roof rail faces said door-side lock portion when the door is closed, and the door-side lock portion and said vehicle body-side lock portion are locked and unlocked;

a door upper-part locking mechanism is provided which locks the door in the vehicle body; and

said load transmitting member is connected to the vehicle body-side lock portion of said door upper-part locking mechanism.

6. (Original) The vehicle upper body structure according to claim 5, wherein said reinforcement is connected at an upper part thereof to said door-side lock portion.

7. (Original) The vehicle upper body structure according to claim 5, wherein:

said door upper-part locking mechanism includes a striker which is provided in the roof rail and has an arm bar protruding downward, and a door latch which is disposed at a free end-side upper part of the door, and latches and unlatches said arm bar of said striker; and

as said load transmitting member, a gusset is used which is connected at one end thereof to the striker and is connected at the other end thereof to said roof opening frame.

8. (Original) The vehicle upper body structure according to claim 7, wherein said striker and one end of said gusset are fixed together to the roof rail.

9. (Original) The vehicle upper body structure according to claim 5, wherein a door lower-part locking mechanism is provided which locks a free-end lower part of the door in a side shell.

10. (Original) The vehicle upper body structure according to claim 9, wherein said door lower-part locking mechanism is connected to a lower part of a reinforcement.

11. (Original) The vehicle upper body structure according to claim 1, wherein:
said load transmitting member is provided between a free-end upper part of the rear door and said roof opening frame; and
a locking mechanism is provided which locks a rear part of the front door at a front part of the rear door.

12. (Original) The vehicle upper body structure according to claim 1, wherein:
said roof opening frame is disposed at a predetermined distance from a front header in the front and rear directions; and
the roof opening frame is connected at a front-end part thereof to the front header by means of a connection member.

13. (Original) The vehicle upper body structure according to claim 12, wherein:
said roof opening frame includes rail portions on both sides, said rail portion extending in the front and rear directions of the vehicle and supporting a supporting portion of said opening and closing member so that said supporting portion slides on the rail portion; and
said connection member is disposed on an extension line of the rail portion in the roof opening frame.

14. (Original) The vehicle upper body structure according to claim 13, wherein said connection member is connected at the other end thereof astride to said front header of

the vehicle body and a roof-portion component member which is adjacent to an end part in the vehicle-width directions of the front header.

15. (Original) The vehicle upper body structure according to claim 1, wherein:
said roof opening frame includes front and rear-side parts and vehicle-width direction-side parts which form a substantially rectangular opening; and
the rear-side part of said opening is located behind the front-end part of said load transmitting member and overlaps forward with the rear-end part of the load transmitting member.

16. (New) A vehicle upper body structure, in which a front door and a rear door cover a continuous door opening with no partition in a side part of a vehicle body so that the door opening is opened and closed, the front door is movable between its closed position and its opened position so that the front door is opened and closed, and the rear door is movable between its close position and its opening position so that the rear door is closed and opened, said vehicle upper body structure comprising:

a roof opening which is formed in a roof portion of the vehicle body and through which a vehicle cabin leads to the outside of a vehicle;

an opening and closing member which covers said roof opening so that the roof opening is opened and closed;

a roof opening frame which supports said opening and closing member; and

a load transmitting member which transmits a load in the vehicle-width directions, said load transmitting member being disposed at a side part of said roof opening frame such that the load transmitting member is located between the roof opening frame and a position corresponding to a rear upper part of the front door when the front door is in the closed position.

17. (New) A vehicle upper body structure, in which a front door and a rear door cover a continuous door opening with no partition in a side part of a vehicle body so that the door opening is opened and closed, the front door is movable between its closed position and its opened position so that the front door is opened and closed, and the rear door is movable

between its closed position and its opened position so that the rear door is closed and opened, said vehicle upper body structure comprising:

- a roof opening which is formed in a roof portion of the vehicle body and through which a vehicle cabin leads to the outside of a vehicle;

- an opening and closing member which covers said roof opening so that the roof opening is opened and closed;

- a roof opening frame which supports said opening and closing member; and

- a load transmitting member which transmits a load in the vehicle-width directions, said load transmitting member being disposed at a side part of said roof opening frame such that the load transmitting member is located between the roof opening frame and a position corresponding to a front upper part of the rear door when the rear door is in the closed position.

18. (New) A vehicle upper body structure, in which a front door and a rear door cover a continuous door opening with no partition in a side part of a vehicle body so that the door opening is opened and closed, the front door is movable between its closed position and its opened position so that the front door is opened and closed, and the rear door is movable between its closed position and its opened position so that the rear door is closed and opened, said vehicle upper body structure comprising:

- a roof opening which is formed in a roof portion of the vehicle body and through which a vehicle cabin leads to the outside of a vehicle;

- an opening and closing member which covers said roof opening so that the roof opening is opened and closed;

- a roof opening frame which supports said opening and closing member; and

- a load transmitting member which transmits a load in the vehicle-width directions, said load transmitting member being disposed at a side part of said roof opening frame such that the load transmitting member is located between the roof opening frame and a position where a rear upper part of the front door and a front upper part of the rear door mate when they are in the closed position.